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CRETAN EXPEDITION

XI¹

THREE CRETAN NECROPOLEIS: REPORT ON THE RESEARCHES AT ERGANOS, PANAGHIA, AND COURTES

[PLATES VI-IX]

It is more than twenty years since Mr. Minos Calokerinós inaugurated, with his trial excavations in the prehistoric palace of Cnossos, the Mycenaean discoveries on the Cretan soil. Almost at the same time some occasional diggings made near Anopolis in the province of Pediada brought to light the first Cretan vases of the Geometric period. From that day the material of both the classes—although in limited proportions—has been gradually increasing. New finds from Cnossos, Gortyna, Milatos, Anoja, Pendamodi, and other places have enabled the Museum of the Syllogos of Candia to gather a series of specimens which have confirmed what was already in the minds of most of the archaeologists, and which later on the researches of Evans, Mariani, Taramelli, Hazzidaki, and myself have demonstrated,—the exceptional importance of Crete in the Mycenaean age.

But up to these recent years no step had been made toward the systematic exploration of a necropolis, or of a prehistoric settlement; and every attempt at a regular and complete exca-

¹ Continued from Vol. II (1898), p. 94. — The Editors regret that the publication of the concluding articles on the Cretan Expedition has been, through no fault of the authors, so long postponed. It is their intention to issue them all in the present volume or in early numbers of the next volume of the *JOURNAL*.

vation of the Palace at Cnossos had been frustrated by various causes, chiefly political. Thus, while on the Greek mainland and in the Cyclades, Mycenaean culture went on delineating every day more definitely its characteristics, and the numerous cemeteries of those early days unveiled to us their recondite secrets, in Crete neither a necropolis nor the exact form of a single tomb was yet known, nor the rite of sepulture there in use. All that we knew was limited to the scanty information gathered by me, about ten years ago, as to the hypogaea of Milatos and Anoja, and as to the discovery of the painted urns, the publication of which I entrusted to Professor Orsi in 1890.¹ But the description of those tombs and the plans of them I sketched could but be very imperfect, as they were derived in great measure from the information of peasants of the region, and only in part from the study of the monuments, which at the time of my visit were already transformed by cultivation and almost ruined.

In such a state of things the investigation of the Mycenaean strata seemed to be a duty. And although the political conditions of the island were in 1894 still more difficult than in the past, and it could not be even dreamed to propose to the government a plan for excavations of this kind, it seemed to me nevertheless that at least a first effort in this direction should be made by the Institute at any cost.

In my numerous excursions through the central and eastern provinces of the island, a favorable opportunity for this purpose did not fail to present itself.

I have already stated in the Introductory Report² to the Cretan Expedition that when on a journey in western Messarà, the news reached me that in the vicinity of the Turkish village of Courtes some tombs had been discovered which contained a large quantity of pottery. I hastened to the place, and what was my surprise in seeing that the peasants had come upon a vast necropolis of the Geometric period, which — as well in the form

¹ Orsi, 'Urne funebri Cretesi' in *Mon. Ant.* II, pp. 202 ff.

² *American Journal of Archaeology*, First Series, Vol. XI, p. 531.

of the tombs as in the shape of the vases — was still full of Mycenaean reminiscences! I immediately began to explore the ground, which had been rudely turned upside down by the treasure-seekers, and I prepared my plan for the excavation and study of some of the tombs. In this work I was efficiently aided by Dr. Taramelli. Unfortunately, however, when I succeeded in putting spade in the ground, the peasants' work of destruction was so advanced that I could only collect, as it were, a few scattered fragments of a great shipwreck. This is the reason why the description we are giving of the tombs in this necropolis will, perhaps, be found somewhat meagre. But the vases were nearly all recovered, and they form the first large group of Cretan pottery which can be published with definite knowledge and statements about its discovery.

As this first effort proved to be not entirely satisfactory, I thought it necessary to institute investigations in another place. This other place was found in the southeastern corner of the province of Pediada, on the heights of Erganos. Here also the hand of man had in past years begun its destroying work; but notwithstanding this fact, the necropolis still contained several tombs which had escaped the devastators. Some of these were found by me still intact, the skeletons still there, with all the objects that had been buried with them, in their places. The cemetery of Erganos belongs to the Mycenaean epoch. Upon the hills above the necropolis are yet visible the vestiges of the little prehistoric city, with the remains of a construction which may have been the palace of the chief, and those of a tower or fortress which defended the approaches to the place.

Our researches in these two localities — especially the work at Erganos — have given us secure data as to the form of the tombs and the mode of interment (which is identical with that of the mainland), and permit us suggestive comparisons for the history of primitive Cretan culture.

These data subsequently were in part supplemented by other researches which I made not far from Erganos in the territory below.

To the west of the deep, shell-like valley of Embaros rises a hill of imposing dimensions called Haghios Ilias, at the foot of which are the hamlet of Aphrati and the village of Panaghia, which is the borough of the homonymous δῆμος. Its summit was occupied by a very ancient city, which must have existed in early Mycenaean days, and survived through the classic epoch; but its name has not come down to us. On the extreme western and southern slopes of the hill I came upon some remains of its more ancient necropolis, consisting of several subterranean quadrilateral constructions, all of them pillaged. I cleared up some of them from the earth and stones accumulated within, and amongst these chambers I found one so well preserved that it deserves to be published as a model of a particular form representing the transition between the common domed tomb of the Mycenaean type, and the subterranean chamber of the classical ages.

I divide my report into three chapters, corresponding to the three localities explored, and begin with the discoveries at Erganos, which are the least fragmentary, and represent the most ancient period. To my friend and colleague, Professor L. Mariani, I have left the task of describing the vases which are the product of these researches; whilst another colleague, Dr. G. Sergi, professor of anthropology in the University of Rome, has been so kind as to write for me a note upon the skulls and other human remains discovered in the tombs of Erganos. To both these scholars I express my cordial thanks for their valuable contribution.

I. ERGANOS

IN the province of Pediada there is no other ancient site, after Lyttos, which has so much exercised the popular imagination as Erganos. The traveller who traverses the villages in the centre and south of this district hears almost at every step sayings and proverbs whispering in his ear, which recall the wealth of Erganos and the treasures hidden in her soil. One

says, 'Ακόμη δὲν εὐρέθηκε τὸ Ἔργανος τὸ λογάρι; Φτωχὰ περνᾷ ἡ Κρήτη. 'Has not the treasure of Erganos been yet discovered? Oh, poor Crete!' According to another version, the treasure is at Lyttos, whilst at Erganos there is underground an enormous store of oil, the odor of which is smelt in the air by passers-by at the hour of noon. Hence the saying, *Χαρὰ στὴ Κρήτη σὰν βρεθῇ τὴ Λύττος τὸ λογάρι καὶ τὸ Ἔργανος τὸ λάδι*. 'Rejoicing for Crete when the treasure of Lyttos and the oil of Erganos come to light.'

As far as regards the city of Lyttos, which covers so wide an extent of ground, and has left, together with many ruins, a name in history, it seemed to me very natural that Cretan folklore would have encircled it with such an ornament of traditions and legends. On the contrary, I was surprised to see magnified in like manner a little mountain site of which not even the name had as yet reached the ear of the archaeologist.

But very speedily I became aware that close to this place were visible, at the surface of the ground, some tombs of a very peculiar form, called by the peasants *ξενοτάφια* ('the graves of the strangers'), a very suggestive designation, with which perhaps is also connected the name of Xeniakio, given to the village on the way to them. These tidings, giving shape and form to the vague popular tales already alluded to, decided me to undertake a journey in search of the place. From the monastery of Angarathos, one of my centres during the exploration of Pediada, I changed my quarters to Embaros, a large village about twelve kilometres south of Castelli, and after a cursory exploration of the environs, where remains of the Mycenaean period are not wanting, I set about climbing the steep valley, which from that point penetrates towards the heart of the mountains of Lassithi. The reader will be able to form an idea as to the approximative position of the little known localities of which we shall have to treat, by casting a glance upon the topographical sketch reproduced in Fig. 1.¹

¹ It seems to me superfluous to add that this sketch has no pretence to geographical exactness.

The road issues from Embaros across olive plantations and groves of cedars, mounting gently along the shady banks of the torrent up to Xeniakko; then with more decided ascent, it pushes on amidst the spurs of the mountains and reaches the little hamlet of Katophygi. Here nature assumes a wilder aspect; the valley draws in and grows winding; the flora of the lower regions is now replaced by a thin Alpine vegetation,

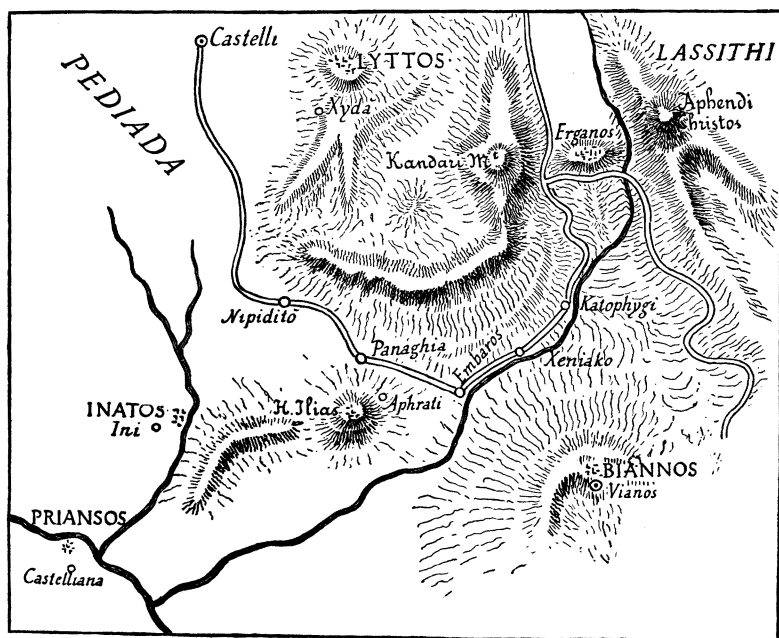
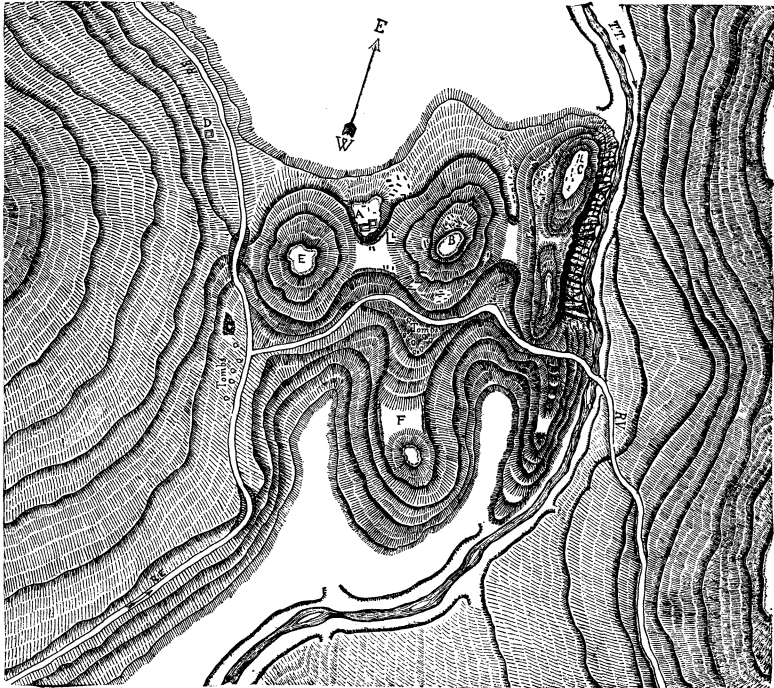


FIGURE 1. — ERGAMOS AND VICINITY.

dotting with a few bushes here and there the steep and rocky ground. As far as Katophygi the ascent can be easily accomplished on horseback; further on the road becomes a precipitous mountain path, in some places hardly accessible to mules. It climbs up the cliffs, flanked on the right by the southwestern summits of the Lassithi, and on the left by Mount Candari. The aspect of the scene becomes more severe at every step. The country is utterly deserted; the profound stillness reigning there is scarcely disturbed from time to time by the cry of the

solitary vulture, hovering over our heads as it passes from one peak to another in search of prey.

At about an hour and a half from Embaros the heights of Erganos are reached. As may be seen in the subjoined general plan (Fig. 2), they consist of a knot of four irregular hills, which, after the fashion of a great wall, suddenly barri-



Candari Mt.

FIGURE 2.—GENERAL PLAN OF ERGANOS.

Aphendi Christós.

RE Path from Embaros to Erganos. *RV* Path to Vianos. *TT* Torrent.

cade the valley and divide it from the higher tableland or plain of Erganos. The three hills *B*, *E*, *F*, the last of which is the lowest, have more or less the form of *mamelons*, or rounded and stunted cones, with declivities now gentle, now steep; the summit *C*, on the other hand, is a kind of tall and precipitous peak, which forms, as it were, an advance guard against the upper valley, and seems to regard with envy the colossus of

Mt. Apheni Christós, rearing itself imposingly and almost perpendicularly above its head.

The view from this place is wonderful. All the lower Pediada is beneath our feet; opposite are the hills and vales of the government of Candia, with the great mass of Mount Ida in the background, and to the left the extensive and ample valley of Messarà, which ends in far distance at the sea. I calculate the height of these hills as about a thousand metres, or more, above the sea level.

Between the highest point *C*, and the precipitous declivities of the Apheni, in a deep gorge, the torrent *TT* opens its passage and descends from the upper valley to water the green basin of Embaros, and afterwards to empty itself into the Anapodari at a short distance from Castelliana.

The path which has led us from Embaros, reaching this natural barrier, now bifurcates. One branch (*RE*) continues to ascend, clinging to the slopes of the Candari, and, opening a way for itself in the hollow formed between the latter and the hills, finds an outlet in the plain of Erganos. The other branch (*RV*) crosses the lower part of the hills and the gorge, and, passing to the right side of the valley, runs along the slopes of the Lassithi chain towards the territory of Vianos.

It is along the sides of these two paths that appear here and there the traces of the tombs which I had heard of. Little isolated heaps of stones are accumulated on the ground above many of the tombs in such a way that in some places the whole surface seems sown over with little irregular humps, not always concealed by the grass and shrubs. In other places a slight cavity, hardly distinguishable from the natural irregularities of the slope, marks the site of a tomb formerly rifled. In two places especially the tombs are grouped together in considerable numbers: near an isolated mass of rock on the slopes of the Candari where the path bifurcates, as already said, and on the extreme roots of the central hillock *B*.

Here we have the necropolis of a community of men who in the early Cretan days occupied this eagle's nest. But first,

before lingering to study the city of the dead, let us climb the hills and try to discover whether time has left any traces of the borough or city of the living.

It is enough to ascend some twenty metres above the zone of the tombs to recognize the first signs of an ancient settlement. Fragments of large and rude primitive vessels with fishbone ornaments, pieces of *pithoi*, like those discovered at Cnossos by Mr. Minos Calokerinós, and small bits of painted Mycenaean vases, peep up here and there on the surface of the grounds. They abound particularly in the small hollows and flat spaces which lie between the two principal hills *B* and *C*, as also on the whole northern slope of *C*. This last fact is curious when one observes that the descent from the point *C* is so steep that it is difficult to imagine how it could have once been covered with habitations. But scrambling up to the summit, we set foot upon a limited tract of ground, longish and narrow, levelled in part artificially, with traces of work in the rock and some scanty remains of material apparently belonging to an ancient wall. Here it is evident once rose a building, or perhaps a group of small buildings, from whence come the fragments of terra-cotta which we meet with on the upper half of the ascent. The violent storms which rage during winter in these elevated regions, and the melting of snow in spring, must have denuded the hilltop of every trace of human work, and partly precipitated into the gorge below, partly rolled down the northern slope, all the material once on the hill. Only at its lower part, where the declivity becomes less abrupt in sinking into the hollow which divides it from the brow of the hill *B*, there still appear traces of houses supported by terrace-walls. But the most populous part of this little city was that which had for its centre the mamelon *B*, and especially the little level space between the heights *B* and *E*, as well as both the slopes of *B*, towards the upper valley of Erganos and towards the necropolis.

In this quarter are visible in plenty the remains of walls, and among them the most remarkable are those which belong to the

construction *A*. The position of this last in a kind of open square, its large proportions, its complex form and the relative care with which its walls are built, cause me to surmise that here we have the remains of the palace, or let us say rather the large house of the chief of the settlement.

The portions remaining above ground of this edifice (Fig. 3), consist of two chambers greatly differing in size, the largest of which is thirteen metres in length and less than three metres wide; both without any apparent vestiges of doors. The main part of the house is perhaps still underground, but the por-

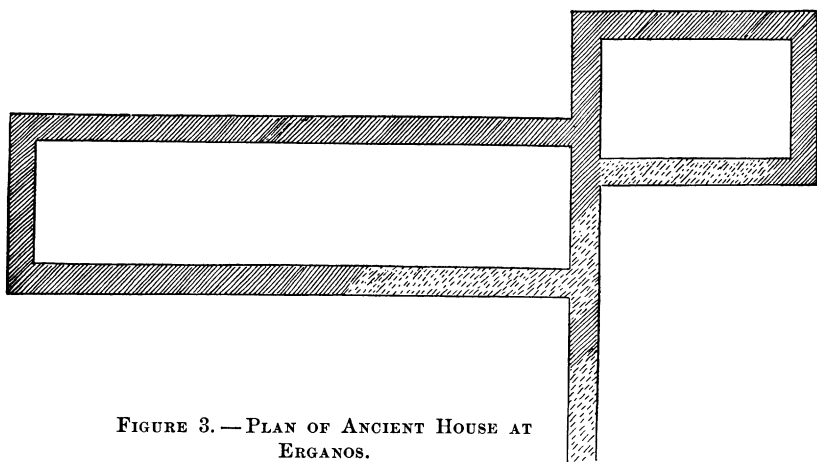


FIGURE 3. — PLAN OF ANCIENT HOUSE AT
ERGANOS.

tion of walls existing can be but insignificant, because here is no accumulation of material which can conceal any building of notable height. The walls visible have an irregular thickness of 0.55–0.65 m. and are composed of rude blocks of moderate size joined together without mortar or cement. They are almost without any foundation, laid upon the ground at little depth below the surface, and are scarcely a metre in height. The upper portion of the construction was doubtless of small unbaked bricks with clayey cement. A trial excavation within the area enclosed by these walls did not bring anything to light except what was sufficient to establish their epoch; such as numerous fragments of the usual *pithoi* and a little

potsherd of a Mycenaean vase painted with ordinary ornamentation.

The summit of *B* as well as the entire hill *E* shows no remains of any kind on the surface.

Another remarkable construction, *D*, is seen below the city at the entrance of the plain of Erganos near the path which skirts the extreme declivity of Mount Candari. This, as is seen in the sketch (Fig. 4), is a rectangle of 10.50 m. long by 6.70 m. broad, constructed without cement like the other buildings, but with stouter walls formed of large natural blocks, some of which only seem to have been roughly squared. The measures of some of them are in length 1.35, 1.45, and 1.60 m.; in breadth 0.60, 0.75, and 0.90 m. The height cannot always be measured, as the upper part only of the walls is above ground. Their thickness varies between 0.85 and 0.90 m.; and consists now of the width of a single block, now of two blocks joined together. From one of the two long sides start traces of an internal partition wall, but they do not reach the opposite side.

For the rest, they are so indeterminate that without an excavation it is impossible to be certain whether they really represent the remains of a wall contemporaneous with the others, or are not rather a *τροχαλός* of stones or a common wall of posterior date. It is, however, very probable that a chamber having an area of seventy square metres would have some interior subdivision. Here also, as in the building *A*, every trace of a door is wanting; but I must here remark that not the whole of the surrounding wall is preserved, and we must not forget further that the entrances to constructions of the Mycenaean epoch were frequently at a great height above the level of the ground, and could only be reached by movable wooden ladders.

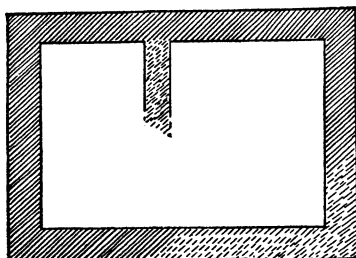


FIGURE 4. — PLAN OF TOWER AT
ERGANOS.

And this must have been the case with our building in question, if it was, as seems to me more than probable, a *pyrgos* or other work of defence. This suggested itself to me not only from its form and the solidity of its walls, but especially from its position in front of the pass forming the sole ingress from the lower to the higher valley. On this tableland the dwellers of the prehistoric city had their cornfields and the pastures for their flocks, and it is very natural that they would have endeavored to protect them from the attacks of the inhabitants of the lower valley and of the plain of Pediada. It would seem to me more difficult to admit that this tower could defend the city from incursions from the upper valley of Erganos, as the hills could be reached from the slopes of *B*, which are quite far from the fortress. This is the building which according to the naïve tradition of the peasantry has subterranean cellars full of oil.

In my explorations in the necropolis, I had secured three excavators from Embaros and Xeniakos.

The place of the single tombs, as I have said above, is for the most part easy to recognize from the little heaps of stones visible on the surface of the ground. I could not say whether these heaps are intentional and in accordance with custom, — or whether they were derived from the repeated openings and closings of the various tombs during the time they were in use. The top of these subterranean constructions comes in contact with the pickaxe at a very slight depth — generally about thirty centimetres — below the ground. They are grouped one quite close to the other, but without any established direction, the *stomion* always looking towards the declivity of the mountain, which is what determines the orientation of the tomb. Their form is that of a rude *tholos* (dome) of small proportions, precisely like an oven or a beehive, with a kind of little short tunnel or channel in tetragonal section before the entrance. The *tholos* is built up *à encorbeillement*; that is, in circle upon circle of common unworked stones without mortar, each course overlapping the one below it so as to form a rough vault, which is closed at the top with a single slab. Owing to the irregularity

of the blocks, and of the whole construction in general, the lines of the courses are, however, most of the time interrupted; one stone sometimes occupies the height of two courses, sometimes only half an one.

The more important among the tombs discovered intact is one of the group occupying the lower slope of the hill *B*. It was completely hidden in the soil, and its place was found by taking as a guide the small heap of stones lying above it. The ground here was so compact, and the declivity so steep, that the infiltrating of rainwater and the consequent penetration of

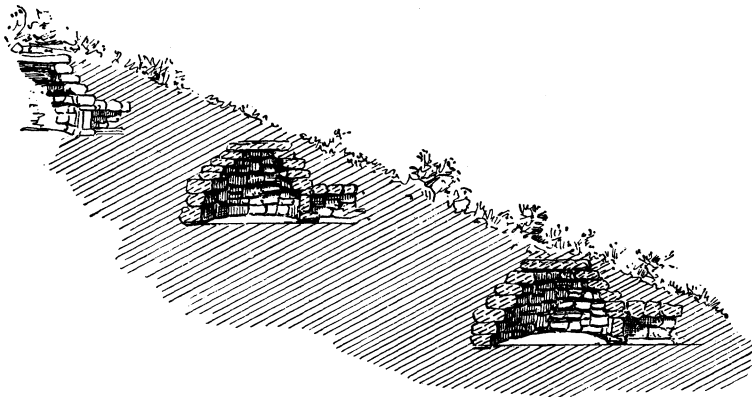


FIGURE 5.—TOMBS AT ERGANOS.

the mould through the fissures of the stones into the *tholos* had been insignificant. The interior of the dome was found almost free from detritus; not even the human remains and the grave-goods were entirely covered by earth. This is the case also in several other tombs examined by me in the necropolis.

In Fig. 6 I give the plan and section of the tomb, the former drawn at the ground-level, and with all the remains it contained reproduced in their places; the second upon the longitudinal diameter, that is to say, upon what passes for the *stomion*, in order to render visible its whole profile. The diameter of the ground-circle is 1.30 m. The vault is only 0.80 m. in clear height; the tunnel or tetragonal channel cor-

responding to the entrance is 0.30 m. wide by about 0.40 m. high, and a little more than 1 m. long.

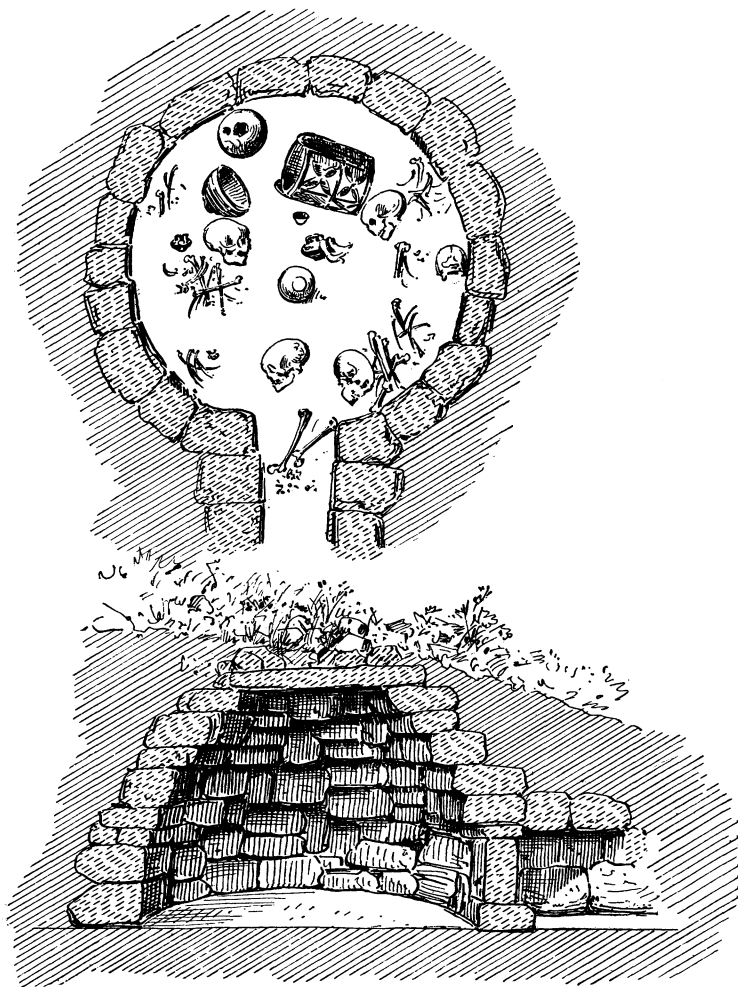


FIGURE 6. — GROUND-PLAN AND ELEVATION OF A TOMB AT ERGANOS.

To excavate this tomb it was found necessary to open it in two places: that is, to disjoin the stones of the tunnel and liberate the *stomion* from what blocked it up, and to remove the large slab which covered the top of the *tholos*. The clearing

out of the material was effected with every precaution and without instruments — working solely with our hands — partly by a workman, partly by myself personally, so that no detail could escape me. The narrowness of the *stomion* being such as not to admit a free passage, we had to lie down on all fours along the direction of the *dromos*, and now one, now another, pushing with great difficulty the head and right arm through the entrance, clear away by degrees the light mould which formed a stratum, scarcely 10 or 15 cm. thick, over the floor of the tomb. Its condition was pretty much that in which it was left soon after the interment of the last bodies. Some of this mould had evidently penetrated into it before the latest burials, because not all the relics of bones and remains of pottery were found placed at the same level.

The bodies here buried were six in number; five of them lay on the floor of the tomb and one was in an ossuary. The skulls were all whole; some in excellent condition, others less perfect; these last on being picked up fell mostly into pieces. As is seen in the drawing, they rested on the ground, now on the right temple, now on the left, another on its face, and they were all near or lying on their respective skeletons, which in general are greatly decayed. The position of the most of the skulls, especially considered in relation to that of the bones, shows it was not the original position; that is to say, that the larger number of the bodies were not laid down with the head resting upon the ground, but that the latter fell in course of time, when by natural decay it became detached from the skeleton. In fact, the lower jaw of one skull lies away from it, and rests upon a false-necked amphora in the centre of the tomb. A similar fact in analogous circumstances has been remarked by Tsountas in a tomb of Mycenae.¹

The bones of the legs are never stretched out, nor could they be so. The circular space of the tomb, which has a diameter of only 1.30 m., would not have been capable of containing in a stretched-out, full-length position even one adult body of

¹ Εφ. μ. 'Αρχ. 1888, p. 132.

middle stature, whereas those deposited in it are five in number. The restricted area besides precludes the idea that all the bodies could have been buried there in a recumbent attitude with the limbs drawn up, and lying either on the right or left side, — as, for example, those in the necropolis of the aeneolithic period lately discovered at Remedello in North Italy.¹ Not even for five bodies lying in this position would there have been room enough; whilst, as can be seen from the drawing, there is even some to spare in the centre of the circle, which is almost entirely free from human remains. It is true we can suppose that in successive burials, when the preceding corpses were already in a state of decomposition, the skeletons would be packed up more closely together to make room for the newcomers, and this really seems to have been done in the case of some skeletons. But from the result of my observations (although the bones — except the thigh bones, the shin and arm bones — are much decayed), it is much more probable that at least the three bodies on the right section of the circle, and perhaps also that one lying alone on the left, must have been placed there seated in the crouching or squatting position around the circular wall of the *tholos*, their backs leaning against it; a position well known in the interments of this and anterior epochs in Greece.² Laid upon the side, but always in a doubled-up position, was instead the corpse whose head is seen just in front of the *dromos*, because his legs protruded from the entrance, with the stone propped over them, with which the *stomion* was closed. But it is not quite impossible that even this body had been also originally in the seated position, and that at a later period the *stomion* being opened for a new burial, this already dried-up skeleton would be pushed partly through the *dromos* to make more room, and the opening closed again with the slab which rests upon his legs.

During one of these later interments a skeleton, probably

¹ *Bull. di Paletnologia Italiana*, Vol. IV, plates ii, iii, iv.

² Cf. for a similar position in the bodies of the Pre-Mycenaean graves at Corinth described by Heermance and Lord, this *JOURNAL*, Vol. I (1897), pp. 313 ff.

that of the head of the family or some other distinguished person, — or perhaps simply the remains of the individual first buried there, — was collected in an ossuary. This is the large vessel which we see in the upper portion of the circle, near the skull lying with the right temple on the ground. It had originally a hemispheric lid, and was placed upright in the tomb. But probably the fall of the neighboring skeleton turned the ossuary over in the direction shown by the drawing, and thus the lid fell off upon the skull to the left.

The ossuary is reproduced, together with almost all the other vases discovered in this tomb in our PLATE VI, No. 4. It is of cylindrical form, slightly swelling out all round in the upper part; it has a height of 0.27 m., and a diameter of 0.255 m. in the middle, and of 0.20 m. at the mouth, which is surrounded by an upright lip, or rim, round which the lid fits. The height of the cover, without calculating the handle, is 0.095 m. The ornamentation of the vase is partly preserved, but somewhat faded, partly much effaced and scarcely distinguishable. Our drawing represents the best preserved side; the traces visible on the surface of the opposite side seem to point to an identical or very similar ornament. It consists of two series, one upper and one lower, of squares or checkers, filled now with a four-petalled rose, recalling the floral decorations on a portion of the Mycenaean urn of Milatos,¹ — now with a bunch of broken or zigzag lines, the whole painted in dull brown tint, finely coming out upon the light color of the ground. The two decorated sides are divided from each other by the two bands corresponding with the arching of the handles, in which bands we recognize simple ornaments, much faded, in thin, curved, concentric lines, like those in some of the urns of Anoja.² The lid is painted in simple concentric circles.

Not the whole skeleton, however, was deposited in this receptacle, which would, indeed, have been too small to hold all the bones. It contained the skull of an adult (the lower jaw had

¹ Orsi, 'Urne funebri Cretesi,' *Mon. Ant.* I, p. 209.

² *Ibid.* pp. 205-208.

three large molars on either side), with fragments of other bones, perhaps broken purposely to get them in. As the large femoral bones and the tibiae were wanting, I must suppose that the remains of the torso only had been put into the jar.

The accompanying objects in the grave consisted of five vases, scattered upon the ground here and there, and certainly not deposited at the same time and all together, but on occasion of different burials. To what interment may belong and correspond each one of them, it is impossible to ascertain. Most of them must have been moved about during the time the *tholos* was in use, and they were probably also displaced in consequence of the decomposition and falling over of the seated skeletons. The cup we see in the centre of the tomb is turned upside down; some are also more or less broken, but from the position of the fragments, gathered together in heaps, it does not seem that they were smashed intentionally from ritual motives, as was perhaps the case with a vase in the tomb which we shall next describe. They are four false-necked amphorae of various dimensions, all ornamented, one of them in so many bits it was impossible to reproduce it in the plate, besides a small unpainted phiale, or deep plate. This is the little vase seen in the plan of the tomb, lying between the ossuary and the larger vase upon which the jawbone is resting, and in our PLATE VI, No. 5. Several broken pieces of the other vases which could be fitted together were glued into their proper places, and it is in this condition that the vases are presented to us in the drawing of M. Gillièron in PLATE VI.

The largest is the false-necked amphora, No. 1. It has a height of 0.182 m. The ornaments, much faded, occupy the upper part of its body, upon a band of two broad and two narrow concentric lines; their elements are, as we see, the waving or spiral lines and the groups of small lines disposed now like palm leaves, now without any certain purpose.

Then follows another false-necked amphora (No. 2), the best preserved of all: height, 0.125 m.; greatest diameter, 0.133 m. The decorative elements here are also the waved band, the

spiral lines, and under the spout the filling up of small concentric arches. The painting is opaque, or dull, and the color is almost the same dark brown as on the ossuary.

Another false-necked amphora (No. 3) is somewhat smaller, and almost squashed or flattened in form: height, 0.10 m.; greatest diameter, 0.125 m. It is ornamented with concentric lines and rows of little arches like lace edgings. The color of the ornament is red, on a light ground; and the painting, though faded, presents some traces of lustrous varnish foreign to the preceding vases.

The fourth vase is also a false-necked amphora, but being wholly in fragments, and having the surface much defaced, we cannot see whether or how it was ornamented, nor what could have been its exact proportions. Its approximative measures would be 0.07 m. diameter and 0.075 m. height. It was thus much smaller than the preceding vases. It is the only object discovered in the tomb not represented in our plate.

The reader who has followed me in these notes descriptive of the tomb will probably have asked this question: How did the inhabitants of this settlement manage to get their dead into these subterraneous cells, the *dromoi* of which are represented by a low and narrow tunnel corresponding to a *stomion* of thirty or at the most fifty-eight centimetres wide? That this tunnel and this *stomion* were opened at each interment appears to me clear from the above-mentioned fact, that there was a skeleton found with the legs under the stone of the entrance. But to me it is equally clear that besides the *stomion*, it was necessary to uncover also the roof of the *tholos*, by raising the large slab we have seen on the top, and perhaps also the upper row of stones round the vault. The corpse was let down through this opening, and a person entering the *tholos* must have placed it seated where there was room for it; and if there was not, he would clear a place by packing more closely together the other more or less decayed inmates of the tomb. To introduce the body in the squatting position it was to maintain in the grave, I should suppose the limbs must previously have been bent up, bound, and

swathed together soon after death, before the corpse had time to stiffen. And who knows that the Cretans did not practise the custom of the African Nasamones, as described by Herodotus (IV, 190), a custom which Dr. Tsountas has very opportunely recalled¹ on occasion of his recent important discoveries in the prehistoric necropolis of Amorgos? What is here quite indubitable is the fact that, as generally in the Mycenaean necropoleis of Greece, cremation was not practised. None of the bones I found and examined in this tomb, nor those in the ossuary,—nor any human remains found by me in the other *tholoi*,—present signs of combustion.

No trace of metal was found either in this or in the other tombs by me explored at Erganos, and the supply of grave gear itself is very modest.

In the next tomb (Fig. 7) these are almost utterly wanting. This one, although not very far from the other, has suffered rather from the filtering in of water, with consequently a larger

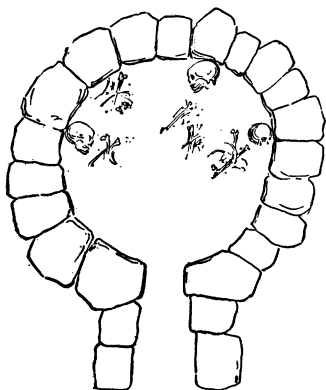


FIGURE 7. —TOMB AT ERGANOS.

penetration of mould. The clear height of the *tholos* is about 1 m.; the accumulation of earth rose to about 0.40 m. from the ceiling. But here also the penetration of the mould must have taken place for the most part during the period of the use of the tomb, and before the last burial. In fact, the first relics of bones discovered came to light almost at the surface of the filling-up material. Together with these remains were the broken pieces of a small saucer without ornaments, perhaps broken purposely as part of the funeral rite. The skeletons of this tomb are three; but they are in such a state of decay that, excepting some portions of the skulls and the leg bones, still very hard, all are reduced to dust. Nevertheless, the position

¹ 'Εφημ. 'Αρχ., 1898, p. 147.

of the skulls, all three against the wall beside the bones of their respective bodies—all collected together—shows us that here also the bodies were deposited in the crouched-up position, seated with their backs to the wall, rather than reclining on the side. The proportions of this chamber are somewhat larger than the other, not only in the height of the vault, but also as to the diameter, which is 1.70 m. Upon the floor of the tomb we find a sort of pavement of rude slabs, as in other known (not Cretan) tombs, which served as a couch for the bodies. Remarkable is the form of the channel or tunnel which widens toward the outside, having here an opening of 0.50 m., while at the *stomion* it is only 0.35 m. Its height is 0.65 m., the length scarcely 1.30 m.

The largest of the tombs explored by me is constructed of very large blocks, and measures a diameter of 1.90 m., an entrance 0.58 m. wide, and 0.75 m. high, and a tunnel 1.40 m. in length. The top of the *tholos* had been removed, and the chamber appears to have been plundered. The actual height of the first course of stones preserved is 1.15 m. from the bottom; the clear height of the vault may have been 1.25 m. or 1.30 m.

All these tombs were evidently family burying-places of the common people. They have nothing in common with the great *tholoi* of continental Greece, and not even with those more modest sepulchres excavated in the soft rock of Anoja in Crete itself, except the form. That this form is ritualistic, or at least traditional, and not in all its particulars depending upon the exigencies and customs of the time, seems to me confirmed by the characteristics of the *stomion* and the tunnel, which is only a variety of the common *dromos*. Whilst originally the *stomion* is the door of the tomb, and the *dromos* the vestibule leading into it, here the *stomion* and the *dromos* as well, are useless, unserviceable accessories, their proportions not lending themselves to the passage of a body either living or dead. They represent the crystallization of two ancient elements; they are atrophied members, one of which, the *dromos*, as we

shall see in the tombs of Panaghia and Courtes, is eliminated and disappears in later times.

I do not know, and rather doubt, whether the family tombs of the chiefs may have been of form and proportions any more developed than these humbler resting-places. From the tales of the peasants, the exactness of which I could not verify, I gathered that in tombs plundered by them many years previously were found golden objects, and one might well believe that such burying-places would be those of the 'lords of the soil.' But nothing has been related to me from which it would appear that these differed sensibly in size and form from the tombs I excavated.

The whole impression made by the ruins of Erganos and the remains of its necropolis is certainly that of a settlement of mediocre importance, a large village of shepherds and hunters; perhaps also the eyry of a bold population of brigands who may have harried the lower settlements around them. Folk-lore has exaggerated the importance of the place; but it is quite explicable how the popular imagination would be struck, at the sight of those works of men's hands and those *tholoi* filled with skeletons amid the lonely cliffs and rocks of the lofty mountain.

To enter into speculations as to the nationality of the people of Erganos would seem to me labor in vain. The thorough exploration of the Cretan prehistoric and proto-historic strata is scarcely begun with these first essays of the American Institute; and it will be only in the course of some years that the soil of the island will offer us contributions of a definitive character toward the solution of so many problems relative to the period in question. Wishing, however, that the data, however slight, might be taken into account, which the human remains of these tombs can offer for the study of the subject, I have requested the well-known anthropologist, Professor Sergi, to examine the best preserved amongst the skulls and other bones collected by me in the excavation, and to communicate his remarks to this JOURNAL. The reader will find them in one of the articles which are appended to this report (pp. 315-318).

Nor will I linger to discuss the etymology of the name Erganos, of no doubtful ancient origin, given to this locality, an inquiry as to which every basis would be wanting to us. Instead of this I invite those who have accompanied me up these savage heights, to return down through the valley into the green recesses of the basin of Embaros, and upon the gentler hills in its vicinity, to search for other remains of the civilization with which we are occupied.

II. EMBAROS AND NIPIDITO; TOMBS NEAR PANAGHIA

THE southeast corner of the province of Pediada, as I have already had occasion to mention, must have been densely inhabited in the early Cretan days.

The whole country of Embaros is sown with ancient remains. On the little *plateau* called *ὁ δρᾶος*, beyond the torrent, rise up here and there mounds of large stones, certainly proceeding from ruined buildings, whilst the surface of the ground is entirely covered with fragments of jars and other vessels, resembling in part those of Erganos and those of Galanà Charakia in the district of Sitia,¹—but partly of a much later epoch. Another ancient settlement was found in the locality called Πατέλα, where also abound just on the surface fragments of Mycenaean pottery; and a third (at the southwest extremity of the village), in the fields of Haghios Petros, — so called from a church dedicated to this saint, now half ruined. The descriptions, however, I have had from the peasants, of edifices there discovered and now no longer visible, do not lead me to think that this last place was of the epoch in question. The prehistoric traces of this territory have been for the most part obliterated by the villages, the farms, and the villas of the Roman epoch, during which the district of Embaros seems to have been quite as populous as in the times preceding the classic period. Of the Roman epoch are also all the inscriptions which so far we have of Embaros, Xeniakos, and Nipidito, and which were published

¹ See *Antiquary*, XXV (1892), p. 155.

in the "Cretan Number" of the first series of this JOURNAL (Vol. XI [1896], pp. 559 ff.).

Among the fragments of early terra-cotta examined by me in these localities none have such distinctive characters of ornamentation as to be worth reproducing or studying separately. I present here instead the slightly enlarged reproduction of a pendant (Fig. 8) of steatite found at Embaros, which was evidently an amulet, and by its characteristics might even belong to the linear series of Evans. But as will be seen in an article to follow, where I shall speak of steatites and other engraved stones I collected in Crete, it is very difficult in some cases to

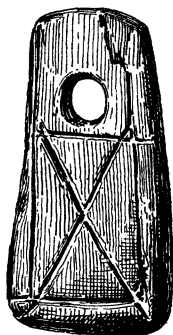


FIGURE 8. — STEATITE PENDANT
FROM EMBAROS.

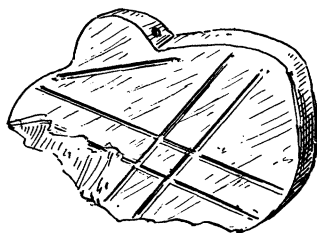


FIGURE 9. — CORNELIAN PENDANT FROM
EMBAROS.

decide whether an object bearing such and such linear marks may be prehistoric or of quite a different date. From the environs of Embaros also comes probably the cornelian pendant (Fig. 9¹), shown me by a peasant of the place. It had originally a form almost discoidal or more properly oval, with a little perforated projection to suspend it on a chain, and it bears on one of the faces a linear mark now fragmentary.

But the two most remarkable pieces I collected on this excursion are two vases of dark steatite, found by the peasants at Nipidito, which I give in Fig. 10. They are two new and very handsome specimens to be added to the now considerable group

¹ This also is a little enlarged in the reproduction.

of Cretan stone vessels made known to us by Mr. Evans in one of his studies upon the Pre-Hellenic antiquities of the island.¹ Not having anything to add to what he has already said about these art productions, which were so much in vogue in Pre-Mycenaean and Mycenaean Crete, I merely limit myself to pointing out the examples of Nipidito as a proof of the extreme antiquity of the settlements of the place.

The early population of this district did not live merely gathered into villages or scattered through the country, but they had also their own city. This occupied the majestic summit of Haghios Ilias, which rears itself between Embaros and Nipidito to a height of about 250 m. above the southern plain

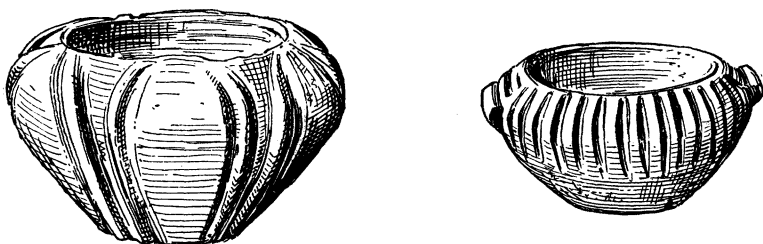


FIGURE 10. — STEATITE VASES FROM EMBAROS.

of Pediada. I postpone for a special article the description of its remains and that of the ancient objects found among them, because not all belong to the epoch with which the present article is occupied. Here I shall delay only to collect the contributions to the study of early Cretan necropoleis afforded us by some tombs in the neighborhood, which I believe may belong to one of its cemeteries.

The western slope of Mount Haghios Ilias descends gradually, in a series of small mamelons and lesser declines, into the plain of Ini.

It is on one of these little hills, called 'ς τοῦ κοφινᾶ τὸ κεφάλι, in close proximity to the modern village of Panaghia, that a few years ago was discovered a group of tombs; but as

¹ Arthur J. Evans, *Cretan Pictographs*, etc., London, 1895, pp. 116-124.

usual these were immediately plundered by the peasants. Their construction, however, was so substantial that the ravagers only succeeded in uncovering them and emptying out the contents, but not in destroying their walls. Although I could not have the hope of finding anything in these rifled hypogaea, nevertheless it seemed to me worth the trouble to clear one or two of them out, to ascertain their exact form. I chose two tombs near each other, but emptied only one completely, because the other, while showing itself identical as to plan and construction,

was not in the same good state of preservation.

Although maintaining the system of construction *à encorbeillement* which we find in the tombs of Erganos, and the same disposition of the openings,—that is, a *stomion* in the wall and a hole covered with one or two slabs at the top,—the tombs of Panaghia differ, however, from those already described in the form of the chamber, which, in place of being

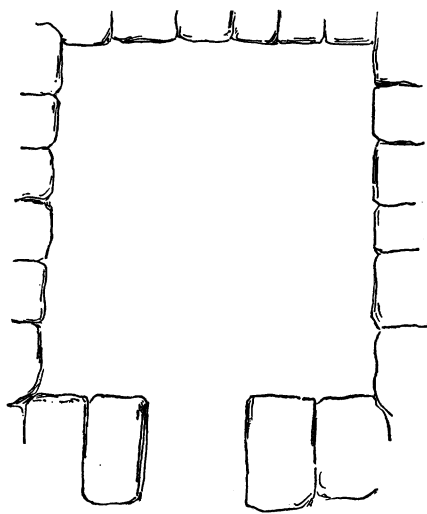


FIGURE 11.—TOMB AT PANAGHIA :
GROUND-PLAN.

on a circular plan and domed, is rectangular, with four lateral walls. But these four sides preserve in themselves the primitive *tholos* character, inasmuch as they incline inward so as to form a truncated hip-roof.

The subjoined cuts (Figures 11 and 12) reproduce the plan and longitudinal section of the tomb that was cleared out. The chamber measures 1.90 m. by 1.65 m. The clear height is 1.25 m.

The entrance looks toward the west, probably because the tomb is on the western slope of the hill, although not precisely

on the line of the declivity, but rather farther back, set in a kind of small plateau.

The hole formed by the interior edges of the last upper course of stones measures at the widest part 0.65 m. The *stomion* is 0.60 m. wide, and 0.70 m. high. Its proportions are therefore somewhat more considerable than in the tombs of Erganos; and here it is a little more difficult to decide whether the bodies were lowered through the opening above or borne through the *stomion*,—so much the more as we have no clew whatever as to the rite of sepulture in this netropolis, none of

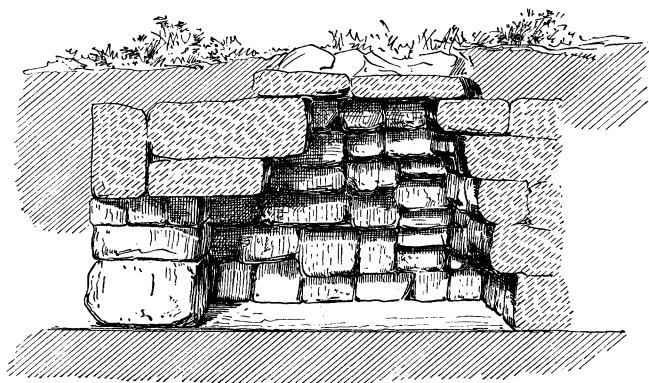


FIGURE 12.—TOMB AT PANAGHIA: SECTION.

the peasants having given me any indication as to the position of the skeletons. The dimensions of the chamber would have lent themselves to the placing of the bodies at full length; I think, however, that the custom of the crouched-up position prevailed also here.

Another peculiarity of the Panaghia hypogaeum is the absence of the tunnel, or *dromos*, which is here only represented by the thickness of the front wall. A huge mass of irregular form, but with the lower side blocked into a straight line, serves for architrave of the *stomion*. I present in Fig. 13, from a photograph taken during my excavation, the exterior view of the tomb, showing the entrance and the opening at the

top after the removal of the two slabs which originally covered it and which had been partly displaced in the previous excavations of the peasants. To restore the ancient aspect of the



FIGURE 13. — TOMB AT PANAGHIA : EXTERIOR.

tomb, we must imagine the *stomion* closed up with one or more stones of large size, the two slabs replaced upon the top, as in the view of the section given above, and the whole covered up with earth, with perhaps a small heap of stones over the mound to mark the place.

I was not able to obtain any account as to the contents of this sepulchral chamber from the people of the place. The only two small objects forgotten by the first excavators and found by me were a finger ring of plain bronze wire in a fragmentary state, and a little whorl of stone of the same form

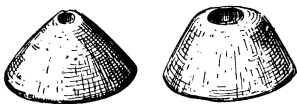


FIGURE 14. — WHORLS.

as the two coming from the same territory, which I reproduce here (Fig. 14), and which are common all over the island.

That we find ourselves also here in the same circle of culture represented by the necropolis of Erganos seems to me evident; but the tomb of Panaghia belongs to the extreme limits of this period. Its squared chamber, derived from the *tholos*, constitutes already the type of transition between the early 'beehive' tomb and the common sepulchral hypogaeum of Hellenic times.

III. THE NECROPOLIS OF COURTES

THE last necropolis of which we have to speak is that of Courtes. This is in another province of the island, in the region of the southeast slopes of Mount Ida, within the complex knot of hills which form the northern borders of the lower Messarà, not far from the great city of Gortyna.

The city to which this cemetery belonged must have seen at least the dawn of historic times, but its ruins have almost totally disappeared, and its name, struck by the same fate as those of the settlements above described, is lost to us.

The sketch of a topographical plan which I here present (Fig. 15) will suffice to give an idea of the situation of the necropolis and of the little which remains of the ruins (RR) of the city.

The hill upon whose slopes the latter rose is called Courtoképhala, or Placoura, or even *τοῦ Φράγκου ἡ καθέδρα*, the 'seat of the Frank,' a sign that also about this place, as around Erganos, Cretan folklore had embroidered its fanciful tales. Its form is so characteristic that, although my photograph of it has greatly suffered, I cannot refrain from reproducing it in PLATE VII. Space for buildings or bulwarks upon the sharp crest which ought to represent the acropolis, there is none. The western point alone above the necropolis bears a few traces of work in the rock.

I have already alluded, in the introductory pages of the present article, to the considerable share Dr. Taramelli had in the exploration of this necropolis. Almost all the work, after my attempt at excavation, including the study of the tombs

devastated by the peasants, is due to him. I shall, therefore, in this part of my report, limit myself merely to making a few observations on the tombs I had begun to clear out in the few hours of excavation I could accomplish by eluding the vigilance of the Turkish authorities of Myres, and upon some very important fragments found by me on the ground. All the rest, with an accurate description of the locality and attempts at restoring

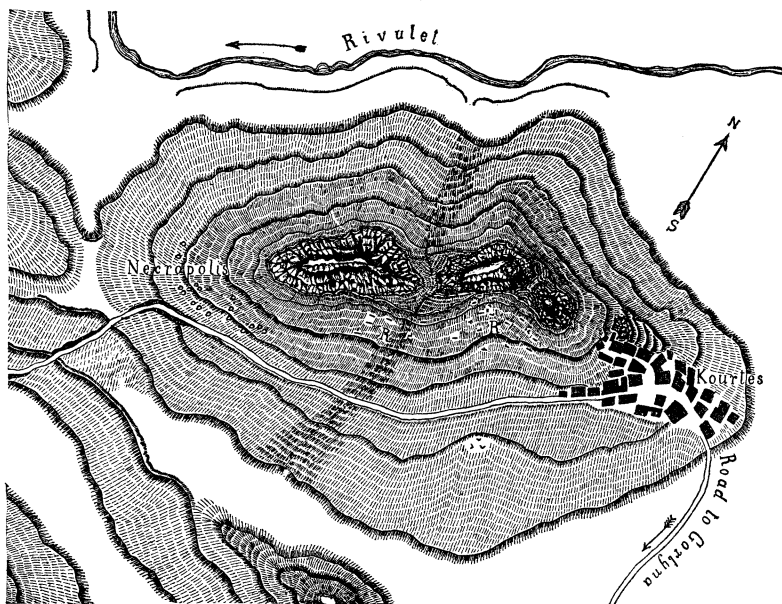


FIGURE 15. — COURTES AND VICINITY.

some of the tombs, will be found in Dr. Taramelli's 'Notes' (pp. 294 ff.). We had desired to give more unity to the exposition of our work at Courtes, and we should have done so if our plan of a systematic exploration of a portion of this necropolis had not been thwarted by Turkish obstruction. But, as has been stated, this work was executed in fits and starts, amidst enormous difficulties, and in various successive excursions, the last of which was made by Dr. Taramelli. In this state of things, instead of combining our results, it seemed


preferable to exhibit them in a form which leaves to each of us the responsibility of his own observations.

The necropolis of Courtes presents the type of a period of transition. As well in the form of the tombs as in the form of several of its vases, Mycenaean characteristics are present. The *tholos*, more or less changed in form, continues to be, at least as to the interior, the structure which is shown by all the sepulchral chambers, but the plan of these becomes less fixed: the builder uses greater freedom; the perfect circle gives place to several varieties, which we may sum up in the horseshoe shape or in the highly varying shape of the Greek *omega* deprived, however, of the two projections at the base (Ω). The only type still wanting in the hypogaea seen by me at Courtes is that of the square plan found at Panaghia. We have instead, in one instance, a curious transformation of the common *tholos* into a kind of cylinder.

The ornamentation of the vases, although equally preserving Mycenaean reminiscences, is decidedly of Geometrical character; and of all the small fragments or objects of other material found by me in the upturned ground, or seen in the hands of the Courtes peasants, only the following seal of steatite (Fig. 16) seems to belong to the Mycenaean period and the linear series of Evans, although some one might also see in the sign it bears a Greek K of the epoch of the Python inscriptions. And that the people who buried their dead in these tombs must



FIGURE 16. — STEATITE SEAL FROM COURTES.

have been already in possession of the signs of Greek writing, is clearly proved from this  little fragment picked up by me near a tomb, in which any one will recognize a Π and a P in retrograde direction, or else a Π and a T of a form exactly that of the alphabet of the Python inscriptions. Besides this fragment of inscription was a portion of a slab (Fig. 17), with a cornice in relief and ornaments of Geometrical zigzag lines.

Metal is very scantily represented, but along with some

fragments of bronze *fibulae* in the shape of a simple arch, and hairpins with plain ornaments of *bullae*, appears iron in pretty numerous lance-heads, unfortunately very fragmentary and much corroded by oxidation. Besides these objects, which, together with the vases, are now in the Syllogos at Candia, I have seen nothing else except bits of whetstone, with holes and flutings, for what use is to me quite inexplicable.

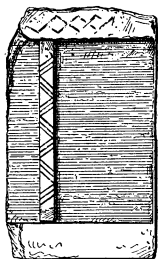


FIGURE 17. — SLAB
FROM COURTES.

Of the nature of the burial here, my imperfect researches give me little to detail; but besides inhumation, which seems to have continued, it seems we may be certain that also cremation had come into practice here as in the other necropoleis of the Cretan Geometric period.

The three tombs I had tried to clear out are at a short distance the one from the other, near the path which skirts the necropolis. Each of them is of a different form, and entrance here also, as everywhere else, looks toward the line of the slope.

The first (Fig. 18) seen from the exterior presents the form of a half ellipse; its interior plan, however, is that of a length-

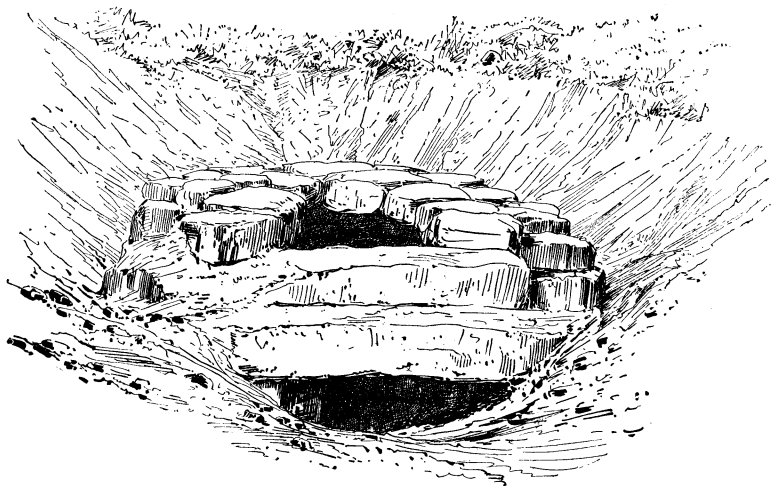


FIGURE 18.—TOMB AT COURTES (cf. Fig. 19).

ened *omega* (Fig. 19). The curved walls are built of irregular courses of stone à *encorbeillement*, constituting a rude *tholos* truncated by the slabs which formed the covering. The front aperture is surmounted by two long stones which made a kind of architrave in a fashion little dissimilar to that of the tomb of Panaghia. The area of the chamber is smaller than that of the tombs of Erganos; the clear height is about 1.50–1.75 m.

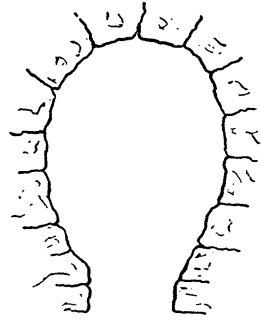


FIGURE 19. — GROUND-PLAN
OF TOMB AT COURTES
(cf. Fig. 18).

The second (Fig. 20), almost completely dismantled, only retained the lower courses of the walls, sufficient, however, to show that also here the stones of the series overlapped so as to constitute a rude vaulting. The plan is that of a somewhat lengthened horseshoe with a longitudinal diameter of 1.55 m. and an oblique one of 0.83 m. The thickness of the wall is only from 0.36–0.38 m.

The third, finally (Fig. 21), is nearly in the form of a cylinder, in which, however, the upper courses slightly contract so as to indicate a vaulted roof. It is the smallest of all, scarcely reaching one metre in diameter. This is the tomb within which I

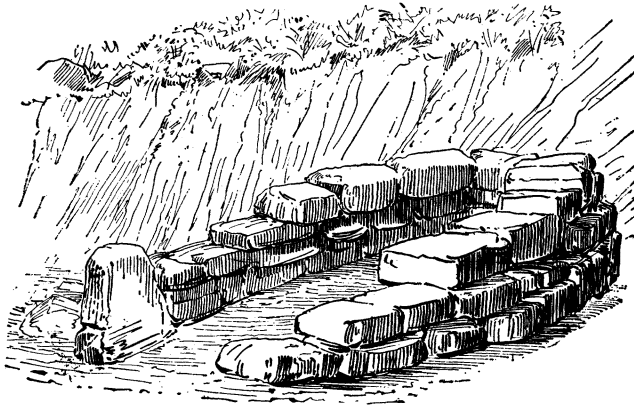


FIGURE 20. — TOMB AT COURTES.

found a large fragmentary vase, containing remains of burnt bones. Outside the tomb, at about the depth of 0.30 m. below the surface of the ground, and in a heap together, were five little rude vases, placed there perhaps from ritualistic reasons.

The vases produced by the excavations of the peasants, which I was able to see and examine on the spot, and which afterwards were nearly all taken to the Syllogos, are in enormous quantities. In PLATES VIII and IX, I have reproduced only

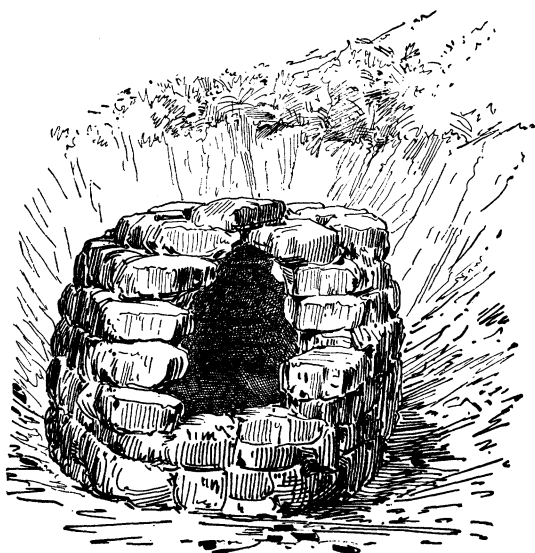


FIGURE 21. — TOMB AT COURTES.

the most remarkable and characteristic types; others will be figured and discussed by Professor Mariani in an article which is to follow. But besides those seen by me I have been informed that the peasants have made other finds which were brought to Candia after my departure.

Numerous above all are the false-necked amphorae, three of which I give in PLATE VIII (Nos. 1-3). Besides their form, more slender than that of the same class of vases found at Erganos and in other Mycenaean places, these have also another notable peculiarity, which is that of a hole in the upper part of the

body to admit air and facilitate the pouring out of the liquid, or they even have the central neck pierced. The one published as No. 2 is the largest: 0.18 m. in height by 0.157 m. in diameter of the body. The smallest of those examined by me is 0.095 m. in height by 0.064 m. in diameter. Not less numerous are the oinochoae, of which I present several examples (PLATE VIII, Nos. 7, 8, etc.), the vases with three handles (PLATE VIII, No. 5; PLATE IX, Nos. 10, 12), the cups, etc.

Besides these, a class well represented is that of the large vases in various forms, whether painted or rough and uncolored. I am sorry that, from a want of attention in the photographer, two of these (PLATE VIII, Nos. 5, and 6 *a* and *b*), a three-handled pitcher, and a vase in the shape of a *cantharos*, have been represented on so small a scale, that, placed together with the others, they give us no idea of their proportions. One of them (No. 5) is nearly half a metre high; the other (No. 6) is 0.275 m. in height and has a maximum diameter of 0.26 m.

Among these vases of large proportions we have also some ossuaries similar in form to those of Cnossos and Stavrakia, but without ornaments, and several *stamnoi* not

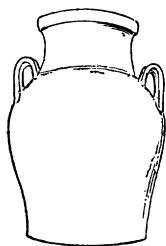


FIGURE 22. — OSSUARY
FROM COURTES.

very different from those used to this day by the Cretan peasants. Figures 21 and 22 reproduce an example of both. The dimensions of the *stamnos* are 0.42 m. in height and 0.25 m. in diameter of



FIGURE 23. — STAMNOS
FROM COURTES.

body; those of the ossuary 0.51 m. in height, 0.37 m. in diameter of body—and 0.205 m. diameter at the mouth.

The painting of most of the vases of Courtes is opaque. Only in some of the handsomest and most elegant, as in No. 14 of PLATE IX, are there signs that they were painted in varnish.

FEDERICO HALBHERR.

ROME, April, 1899.



No. 1



No. 2



No. 4



No. 3



No. 5

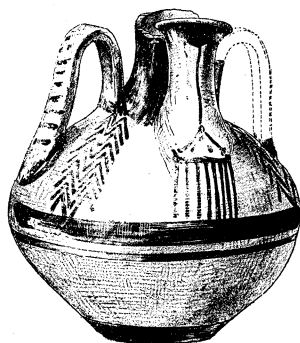
MYCENAEAN VASES FROM THE NECROPOLIS OF ERGANOS



THE HILL OF COURTES (COURTOKEPHALA)



No. 1



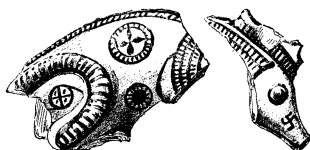
No. 2



No. 3



a



No. 4



b
No. 6



No. 5



No. 7



No. 8



No. 9

VASES FROM THE NECROPOLIS OF COURTES



No. 10



No. 12



No. 11



No. 13



No. 14



No. 15



No. 16



No. 17